

REMARKS

The applicants note with appreciation the acknowledgement of the claim for priority under section 119 and the notice that all of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

Claims 1 – 7 and 9 – 21 are pending, with claims 10 – 14 being withdrawn. Claims 2, 4, 7, 16 – 17, 19 and 20 are indicated as allowable if rewritten in independent form with the limitations of the base claims.. The applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1 – 4, 6, 15, and 17 have been amended to broaden “cover sheet portions” to “adhesive sheet portions.” “Cover sheet” corresponds to one embodiment of the adhesive sheet.

Claims 1, 3, 6, 9 and 18 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by DE 599,159 (“’159”). Claims 5 and 15 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over ‘159. The rejections are respectfully traversed for reasons including the following, which are provided by way of example.

As described in the application, one or more aspects of the invention are directed to providing “a laminate sheet which is capable of preventing the formation of defects on an adhesive sheet when the laminate sheet is wound into a roll.” (Specification page 3, lines 9 - 12.)

According to the claims, e.g., claim 1, the invention is directed to a laminate sheet windable into a roll. There is a plurality of adhesive sheet portions having a predetermined form, formed from an adhesive sheet laminated on a long release sheet. There is also a protective member laminated on the long release sheet. The protective member is thicker than the adhesive sheet and is provided longitudinally on the long release sheet and spaced apart from the adhesive sheet portions so as not to overlap the adhesive sheet portions when the laminate sheet is wound

longitudinally into a roll. (E.g., claim 1; see also claim 3.) Thereby, “a slight gap is produced between the surface of the adhesive sheet portion and the back surface of the release sheet” when wound into a roll, and “traces caused by winding pressure are reliably prevented from forming on the adhesive sheet portion. (Specification page 21, line 17 – page 22, line 3.)

Without conceding that ‘159 discloses any feature of the present invention, ‘159 is directed to a laminate sheet comprising an adhesive strip provided with adhesive and elevations consisting of non-cohesive wafers of “paper or similar material.” According to the English translation, “The adhesive can run over the entire surface of the adhesive strip. In addition, it can be omitted in the centre, as indicated in Figures 1 to 3, since it suffices if the wafers are only stuck firmly onto part of its surface.”

According to the office action, the wafers of ‘159 correspond to the recited “protective member,” and the recited “plurality of adhesive sheet portions” (as amended) corresponds to the strips of adhesive in ‘159. However, according to claim 1, the protective member is “spaced apart from said adhesive sheet portions so as to not overlap said adhesive sheet portions when said laminate sheet is wound longitudinally into a roll.” According to claim 3, the protective member is “spaced apart from the adhesive sheet portions.”

In ‘159, to the contrary, the protective member is not spaced apart from the adhesive sheet portion. ‘159 teaches that the wafers (the protective member) are “stuck firmly onto” the adhesive (the adhesive sheet portion). In fact, because the wafers of ‘159 are “paper or similar,” it appears that the protective members of ‘159 must not be spaced apart from the adhesive.

The office action states that ‘159, Fig. 1 illustrates a disc member not overlapping the adhesive sheet, and that ‘159, Fig. 3 illustrates a disc member partially intruding onto the adhesive sheet. This statement is incorrect. In each instance, the disc members of ‘159 are

“stuck firmly” onto the adhesive. Therefore, they overlap the adhesive sheet. Moreover, claim 3 recites in combination that the protective member is not only spaced apart from the cover sheet portions but also “... shaped to intrude between the cover sheet portions.” Therefore, ‘159’s disk member is not spaced apart from the adhesive and is not shaped to intrude between the adhesive.

Moreover, claims 1 and 3 recite, in combination, that the adhesive sheet portions are “formed from an adhesive sheet laminated on a long release sheet.” ‘159 fails to teach or suggest such a construction. To the contrary, ‘159 merely discloses an adhesive strip.

Accordingly, ‘159 fails to teach or suggest several features recited in independent claim 1 and 3, and moreover fails to teach or suggest the combination of several features of claims 1 and 3.

For at least these reasons, the combination of features recited in independent claims 1 and 3, when interpreted as a whole, is submitted to patentably distinguish over the prior art. In addition, ‘159 clearly fails to show other claimed features as well.

With respect to the rejected dependent claims, applicant respectfully submits that these claims are allowable not only by virtue of their dependency from independent claims 1 or 3, but also because of additional features they recite in combination.

New claim 21 been added to further define the invention, and is believed to be patentable for reasons including these set out above.

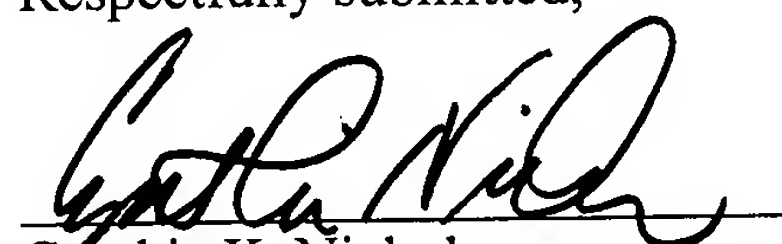
The applicants respectfully submit that, as described above, the cited prior art does not show or suggest the combination of features recited in the claims. The applicants do not concede that the cited prior art shown any of the elements recited in the claims. However, the applicants have provided specific examples of elements in the claims that are clearly not present in the cited prior art.

The applicants strongly emphasize that one reviewing the prosecution history should not interpret any of the examples the applicants have described herein in connection with distinguishing over the prior art as limiting to those specific features in isolation. Rather, for the sake of simplicity, the applicants have provided examples of why the claims described above are distinguishable over the cited prior art.

In view of the foregoing, the applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. A timely notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If questions relating to patentability remain, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone.

Please charge any unforeseen fees that may be due to Deposit Account No. 50-1147.

Respectfully submitted,



Cynthia K. Nicholson

Reg. No. 36,880

Posz Law Group, PLC
11250 Roger Bacon Drive, Suite 10
Reston, VA 20190
Phone 703-707-9110
Fax 703-707-9112
Customer No. 23400